

# THE POLYNESIAN.

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## COMMUNICATED.

HONOLULU, Oct. 1811.

MR EDITOR.—We shall now pass from the consideration of the history to notice one point in the Supplement. The writer takes especial pains to make it appear that the chiefs were hostile to the French as such. Nothing can be more unjust or ungenerous than this attempt to excite the suspicions and ill-will of a powerful and sensitive people, jealous of their honor against a powerless one. The writer had long lived protected and unmolested upon the domains of the Hawaiian king, and this is a specimen of his returns. Excepting the gentlemen attached to the Catholic mission we cannot ascertain that for many years past there have been any French subjects residing at the Sandwich Islands. There may have been some absconding sailors, but if any they are few. It is said that Mr Dudoit, the French Consul is a British subject from the Isle of France, and Mr Gravier, a resident, although born in France removed with his parents to New Orleans when two years of age, and is an American citizen. It is however probable that the government knew them only as Frenchmen, and we have never heard that they have not had the same measure of protection meted out to them that other foreigners enjoyed. Very few French merchantmen or whalers touch at the islands, but such as have, have enjoyed as much protection and attention as vessels belonging to other nations.

The Supplement adduces the use of the terms by the chiefs in their documents of "Frenchmen," French gentlemen," "men of France," French religion," &c. as evidences of particular hostility, to the French government and people, and also says, "Can it be possible that Mr Castle is ignorant that at the very time Mr Bachelot was imprisoned, and at the period when he was finally expelled, Mr Walsh, a Catholic priest but British subject, was residing on shore and celebrating mass at the French mission house." We can see no evidence of hostility to the French in the terms made use of by the chiefs, or that they were used or intended to be used as terms of reproach. The first Papal missionaries were brought from France in a French vessel and it is not singular that the uninformed natives should call them Frenchmen, (although there was a British subject) and their religion the French religion, and from the first associations in their minds all who adopted their mode of worship Frenchmen. The French and Catholic religion were synonymous in their minds from their first impressions. The native Catholics call their religion by the same name now. The terms are not, nor have they ever been used as terms of reproach, hostility or insult to France.

The writer further to prove exclusive hostility to the French has drawn a contrast between the treatment of Mr Bachelot a French subject and Mr Walsh a British subject, both of whom he tells us are Catholic priests. It will be seen that in this comparison he has not mentioned the fact that Mr Short known by the chiefs to be a British subject was treated in all respects like Mr Bachelot. He has doubtless passed this fact over in silence as a simple statement of it would have been direct proof against the point he wished to establish. It would have proved that the subjects of the two governments were treated precisely alike, and therefore some other cause than exclusive hostility to one more than the other must be sought,

for the proceedings of the chiefs in the case. If Mr Bachelot suffered *because* he was a Frenchman how happened the French Mechanics to escape, and how did the Briton become involved in his sufferings. The chiefs tell us that they suffered because they were Catholic priests who persisted in staying in the country contrary to their wishes, and all the facts and circumstances go to establish the truth of their testimony. If we would see why Mr Walsh enjoyed the privileges which it is claimed that he enjoyed we have only to look back to the 25th page of the Supplement to learn that he not only had no permission to land and reside but that he did so in direct opposition to the orders of the government, for we are told that "Mr Walsh continued daily to be insulted by orders from the chiefs to leave the island, but under the protection of the British Consul he was secured from personal violence." Our readers will not be at a loss for the reason of Mr Walsh's course, but will be likely to enquire whence the authority and right of the British consul as an officer of the British government to countenance protect and defend his fellow subject in setting at defiance and violating the mandates of the government to which he came as a representative.

If Mr Walsh was permitted to reside at the islands after the treaty with Lord Russel it was only on condition of obedience to the laws. Lord Russel wished to know whether Mr Walsh might have permission to hold mass in his own house for his own benefit and that of foreigners who might wish to attend. The king replied "Let them worship in their hearts, or keep their religion in their own breasts." He could not give his consent for them to hold public worship. The king asked the question, If Mr Walsh should not conform to the laws, but contrary to his promise should attempt to propagate his religion what then would be proper for the government to do. The answer was that the king would have a right to send him away. Thus it will be seen that if Mr Walsh held public worship, (for it must have been public to suppose with reason that ourselves and others were acquainted with it) he was violating the conditions upon which he was allowed to remain. As to the insinuations of missionary prejudice and illiberality towards the French they are not founded in truth. The missionaries have doubtless spoken upon the subject of Catholicism when they have thought best. They are not ignorant that there are and always have been many French Protestants, and that Protestant countries contain many Catholics. Against Frenchmen they are not aware of any prejudice or illiberal feelings, and these charges against the government and missionaries are "like the baseless fabric of a vision," without even a shadow of a shadow for a foundation. The government has only denied a residence to propagators of the Roman faith, and to these without respect of country or persons. From other subjects of all countries protection has not been withheld.

We are sensible that the communications which we have now presented to the public through your journal bear marks of haste and are in many respects defective, but the very limited period of time which we were enabled to devote to them, which was also nearly filled up with other avocations must be our apology for sending them forth in so imperfect a dress.

Very Respectfully,

Your friend and Servant,  
S. N. CASTLE.

## LEAVES FROM MY JOURNAL.—By J. F. B. M. No 3.—SCENES ON CALIFORNIA.

The morning after our arrival, we were invited to ride out to the Mission at Carmel, and at about 12 o'clock we started. After a very pleasant ride of about eight miles through a beautiful country, we reached the valley, at the bottom of which rose a stately building, which looked like one of the ruins of the old world, and seemed much out of place here, without even an Indian's hut in sight of its lofty dome. The main building is very large and presents quite an imposing appearance. It is in the old Moorish style built in the form of a hollow square, and fortified. The belfrey contained a chime of six bells, most of which are broken. The whole building is in ruins and uninhabited except by an old shepherd who has charge of the cattle in the valley, and it presents a mournful picture of desolation. As we roamed through the deserted halls, I could hardly realize that I was not exploring some of the monastic ruins of Old Spain; every thing about us wore such a venerable and ancient aspect. It stands in the midst of a picturesque valley whose sides were once cultivated, and dotted with the huts of the Indians, but is now uninhabited and scarce a vestige remains of its former populous and flourishing state. The history of the California missions bears a strong contrast to that of the Protestants in the Pacific, and many enlightened persons will be found to advocate the different systems pursued by both, while as many perhaps will condemn both. As yet but a partial success has been found to follow the systems of either, which it is possible, if the missionaries had been entirely left to themselves would have met with complete success. The first Catholic mission was established here in 1769, by thirty six monks of the order of St. Francis, who came out accompanied by artisans and soldiers, the latter to protect them against the attacks of the wild Indians whom they were to tame and convert, and the former to build the missions. After the missions were built and fortified like so many castles, they commenced the work of christianizing and civilizing the heathen, in which they were at first unsuccessful, as the wild habits of the natives were not to be overcome by mild and conciliatory measures. At last they resorted to the novel plan of sending bands of soldiers to seize them and bring them forcibly within the pale of the church. Having kept them confined within the walls of the monastery, until by kind treatment they had become attached to their new mode of life, they sent them out to draw their fellow savages to the same place. In this manner were the first conversions to christianity brought about on California. The Indians finding that they were to be well fed and clothed, and were to possess many luxuries, which their intercourse with white men had taught them to prize, soon came voluntarily to join the missions, which began to prosper. The system of government was simple and effectual. Each mission resembled a large family. One Padre was at the head, to whom the Indians like children looked for the supply of every want, and for whom they all labored. They were made to understand that the missions were their own property, and with all the profits which they should accumulate would be taken care of by the Padre, who furnished them as they needed with clothes, &c. This system seems the most natural and most effectual one to adopt among savages, who

are in fact but children in all that relates to religion and civilization. Its greatest objection is the temptation given by the entrusting so much power and wealth in the hands of any class of men to make a temporal use of it, for their own benefit. In this case the system succeeded as perfectly perhaps as any system for evangelizing the savage has yet done, and was probably the only one that could have succeeded at all. The Missions rapidly increased in numbers, and possessed nearly all the wealth in the country. The Mission of St. Gabriel had at one time over one hundred thousand head of cattle, which reckoned at five dollars a head, their current value, the wealth of the mission in cattle alone was more than five hundred thousand dollars. Indeed their flocks and herds were so large that they could not manage them, but offered to stock a "rancho," or farm, for any one who would agree to return the original number when called upon.

The government of the country at last began to look with an evil eye upon the wealth of the monastic establishments from whom they had often been obliged to borrow money, and in the year 1835 Don Nicolas Gutierrez the Governor of California, took possession of all the missions, continuing the monks in charge of them, but appropriating their wealth for the benefit of government. This step was the ruin of the missions. The Indians who had always considered themselves the owners or stockholders, finding the wealth which they had labored to accumulate thus forcibly taken from them, gradually deserted the missions and returned to their former modes of life, the most civilized cultivating ranchos and breeding cattle, the rest living by hunting. The buildings rapidly went to decay, and at the present time, many of them are entirely broken up and uninhabited, as was the case with the Mission of Carmel. Its bells, whose chimes once echoed through this beautiful valley, calling the faithful to vespers, now hang in mournful silence, scarce one of those faithful remaining within sound of their summons.

On returning to town we varied our route, passing through a country rich in scenery and covered with the most luxuriant vegetation. The excellence of the road and the spirit of most of our steeds afforded too great a temptation for a gallop, to be resisted, and our party was soon scattered. I was riding alone when I came in sight of the town, and seeing to my great joy, the long expected A. at anchor in the harbor, I hurried on to meet my old friend Capt. C. and riding over a small bridge which was thrown across a ravine, was passing the "Cuartel" or barracks, when I was rudely stopped by some of the soldiers, who commenced a long rigmarole in Spanish, which might as well have been in Choctaw, for any light which it threw on the cause of the trouble. My ignorance of the language was probably considered as an insult by these mustachioed worthies, who commenced a practical interpretation of their ideas, by first pulling me from my horse, which one took one way, while another relieved me of my spurs, which he took another way, and some four or five of them took my own sacred person in still another direction towards a very suspicious looking building which I shrewdly surmised was the Calaboose, and which I inwardly determined should not be my residence if I could help it. The transaction was so sudden and unceremonious, that I was completely taken aback, and here I was, in the hands